

The committee on agriculture, to whom was referred the memorial of Edward P. Roberts, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to

REPORT,

That the memorialist prays a loan from the State of \$12,000 for 7 years, at an interest of six per cent, payable semi annually, with the privilege of returning a part of the principal at any time within the term of the grant, which he proposes to invest in a farm, cocoonery, and other implements proper for a silk establishment, with a view to the cultivation of the article; and by the results of a successful experiment to prove the expediency and importance of this culture to the agriculturists of the State. And as a further inducement to the loan, he offers to mortgage the farm, cocoonery &c. to the State, to board, lodge, and instruct two children, from each county, in the culture and manufacture of silk, annually for 7 years, and to furnish after the year 1838 any amount of mulberry trees, not exceeding in the aggregate 50,000 in any one year, to the citizens of the State at \$5 00 per hundred.

Your committee regard the introduction of the silk culture as an object of great and growing importance, worthy the care and aid of the Legislature; but whether the plan proposed by the memorialist is practicable, or calculated to promote that object to an extent, and in a mode, consistent with a wise and just policy, are questions upon which your committee have doubts, and upon which it is alike due to the claims of the memorialist, and the interests of agriculture to decide with impartiality;—Your committee are of opinion that the scheme submitted by the memorialists, presents considerations of deep interest to this branch of industry, and would unite in recommending the grant if the obstacles to a successful fulfilment of its conditions were of a less decided character. That a practical knowledge of the silk culture is to be acquired by youth in the short space of a year, is a proposition, which, in the view of your committee, is not likely to be realized; while the advantages resulting from a reduction in the price of the mulberry cannot be expected to inure equally to our agriculturists. The adaptation of our soil and climate, to the profitable cultivation of silk is pretty generally admitted: every attempt for that purpose having been crowned with a degree of success, more or less calculated to justify the opinion. Many of our citizens, some in a private, and others in a corporate capacity, have embarked with zeal in the business, and it is hoped that their success will be a medium of more extensive information, and excite a laudable spirit of enterprise among our people. Apart from these considerations, your committee perceive that a grant of the kind prayed for, involves a question of policy by establishing a precedent, under which the claims of others would come up with equal right to indulgence. It is against the policy of the law to recognise any preference among our citizens, or grant to one a privilege or bounty which others having equal claims, cannot equally enjoy. Our practice under such a precedent, to be fair, might require